

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A hard caramel with ~~improved stability in storage~~ reduced water uptake containing 1,1-GPM (1-O- α -D-glucopyranosyl-D-mannitol) in an amount of 52 wt% to 60 wt% (based on the total dry solids of the hard caramel) and sorbitol in an amount of 0.5 wt% to 3.5 wt%.
2. (Previously Presented) The hard caramel according to Claim 1, wherein the 1,1-GPM content is 54 wt% to 58 wt%.
3. (Previously Presented) The hard caramel according to Claim 2, wherein the 1,1-GPM content is 55 wt% to 57 wt%.
4. (Previously Presented) The hard caramel according to one of the preceding Claims, wherein the sorbitol content is 1 wt% to 1.5 wt%.
5. (Previously Presented) The hard caramel according to one of Claims 1 through 3, wherein the sorbitol content is 1.8 wt% to 3.5 wt%.
6. (Previously Presented) The hard caramel according to one of Claims 1 and 2, wherein the 1,1-GPM content is 54 wt% to 56 wt% and the sorbitol content is 1.8 wt% to 3.5 wt%.
7. (Previously Presented) The hard caramel according to Claim 6, wherein the 1,1-GPM content is 55 wt% and the sorbitol content is 3 wt%.

8. (Previously Presented) The hard caramel according to Claim 1, wherein the 1,1-GPM content is 56 wt% to 60 wt% and the sorbitol content is 0.8 wt% to 1.8 wt%.

9. (Previously Presented) The hard caramel according to Claim 1, wherein the hard caramel contains sweeteners, fillers, flavoring agents, coloring agents, flavor enhancers, medicinally active ingredients, food-compatible acids, fat substitutes, mineral salts and/or intense sweeteners.

10. (Previously Presented) The hard caramel according to Claim 1, wherein the hard caramel contains 36.5 wt% to 47.5 wt% of at least one additional sweetener selected from the group consisting of 1,6-GPS (6-O- α -D-glucopyranosyl-D-sorbitol), 1,1-GPS (1-O- α -D-glucopyranosyl-D-sorbitol), mannitol, and hydrogenated or non-hydrogenated oligosaccharides.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a hard caramel with ~~improved stability in storage~~ reduced water uptake according to Claim 1, wherein an aqueous solution or suspension of a mixture containing 1,1-GPM and sorbitol is evaporated under the influence of heat, then cooled and molded, yielding a hard caramel with ~~improved stability in storage~~ reduced water uptake.

12. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a hard caramel with ~~improved stability in storage~~ reduced water uptake according to Claim 1, wherein a mixture containing 1,1-GPM and sorbitol is melt extruded, cooled and molded, yielding a hard caramel with ~~improved stability in storage~~ reduced water uptake.